United Nations A/57/75–E/2002/57

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2002

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Item 94 of the preliminary list*
Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2002
New York, 1-26 July 2002
Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda**
Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits: integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General***

Executive summary

The present report will be considered by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2002 as well as by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. Section I analyses how the three-tiered system for the follow-up to and review of conferences has functioned in 2001-2002 and looks into the specific roles of the Assembly, the Council and the functional commissions in conference follow-up. It addresses the follow-up process launched by the Council in 2000-2001 to improve the reviews of conferences at intergovernmental level and provides elements to support the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session in examining how best to address the reviews of the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations

* A/57/50/Rev.1.
** E/2002/100 and Add.1.
*** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

02-37386 (E) 190602

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conferences and summits of the 1990s in the economic and social fields (Assembly resolution 56/211).

Section II discusses the importance of integrating the follow-up to the Millennium Summit with the follow-up to other conferences and summits and reviews the role of the Economic and Social Council and the functional commissions in this regard. Particular attention is paid to the global campaign for the millennium development goals.

Section III addresses recent developments in conference follow-up, notably challenges posed in the areas of gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. Finally, the report reflects on the role of the Economic and Social Council in enhancing policy coherence in the follow-up processes of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
	Introduction	1–3	4
I.	Follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits at the intergovernmental level	4–27	4
	A. Possible steps for improving conference reviews at intergovernmental level	4–8	4
	B. Functioning of the three-tiered system in 2001-2002 in reviewing conferences	9–20	5
	1. General Assembly	10	5
	2. The role of the Council in follow-up to United Nations conferences	11–13	5
	3. The functional commissions	14–20	5
	C. Participation of relevant stakeholders	21–23	7
	D. Recommendations	24–27	8
II.	Follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration	28–53	8
	A. General Assembly	29–31	8
	B. Possible contributions by the Council and its functional commissions	32–43	9
	C. United Nations system global campaign for the millennium development goals	44–47	11
	D. Recommendations	48–53	12
III.	Other developments related to conference follow-up	54–68	12
	A. New approach regarding follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development	55–59	13
	B. Special challenges in conference follow-up	60–63	13
	1. Gender mainstreaming	60–61	13
	2. Least developed countries	62–63	14
	C. New developments at the special session of the General Assembly on children and the "World Food Summit: five years later"	64–66	14
	D. Recommendations	67–68	15

Introduction

1. Since 1995, the Economic and Social Council has undertaken to promote a coordinated and integrated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and the reviews of their implementation. At the general segment of its substantive session of 2001, the Council, in resolution 2001/21, reaffirmed its commitment to pursuing this goal.

2. In the same resolution, the Council also reiterated its commitment to assisting the General Assembly in its overall responsibilities in follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration[1] and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits and the reviews of their implementation. The Council decided to strengthen the links with the relevant functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the United Nations system in follow-up to conferences and summits, by reviewing progress in the implementation of cross-cutting issues, and to strengthen links with the Assembly by bringing to its attention overall policy issues that might emerge from such follow-up and might require the Assembly's consideration. In this context, the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the implementation of resolution 2001/21, ensuring full integration between the review and follow-up processes of the Millennium Summit and of other conferences and summits.

3. The present report has been prepared in response to that request. It also responds to Council resolution 2001/42, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council in 2002 on the global campaign for poverty eradication.

I. Follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits at the intergovernmental level

A. Possible steps for improving conference reviews at intergovernmental level

4. In its agreed conclusions 1995/1[2] and 2000/2[3] as well as relevant resolutions, the Council has been providing guidance to the United Nations system on how to ensure a coordinated and integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. Year after year, it has provided guidance to the United Nations system organizations on working together in a coordinated way in countries and at intergovernmental level to help implement and follow up major conferences and summits.

5. In 2000, the Council undertook a comprehensive assessment of the progress made within the United Nations system, through the conference reviews, in the promotion of an integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields and launched a process to improve the reviews of conferences at intergovernmental level. A number of options have been put forward by the Secretary-General for improving the review of conferences at intergovernmental level.[4] As specific follow-up to agreed conclusions 2000/2, the Secretary-General prepared a report (E/2001/73), which was considered by the Council at the general segment of its substantive session of 2001. At the same segment, the Council adopted resolution 2001/21.

6. The Council, in resolution 2001/21, recommended that the General Assembly consider how best to address the issue of comprehensive conference follow-up. In response to Council resolution 2001/21, the Assembly, in resolution 56/211, decided to examine how best to address the reviews of the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s, in the economic and social fields, including their format and periodicity. The Assembly also decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session an item on the subject and requested the Secretary-General to make available to it the present report.

7. The Council will take into account the policy guidance that the General Assembly provides during its fifty-seventh session. In preparing its guidance, the Assembly might wish to encourage the Council to further enhance its role in conference follow-up. The Council has a key role with respect to promoting an integrated and coordinated approach to conferences, notably the goals of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development. It is a key actor in maintaining the focus on the implementation of goals of conferences, which are important means for achieving the millennium development goals.

The Council notably pursues this role by addressing cross-cutting themes of conferences.

8. The Council will continue to draw the attention of the General Assembly to obstacles and constraints as well as to new challenges identified by the reviews that affect progress towards conference goals.[5]

B. Functioning of the three-tiered system in 2001-2002 in reviewing conferences

9. The Council, in resolution 2001/21, recalled that the General Assembly, the Council and the relevant functional commissions or other relevant bodies of the United Nations system would continue to play, within their respective mandates, the primary role with regard to follow-up and in coordinating and implementing the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits. Within this three-tiered structure, the Council and the functional commissions are supporting the Assembly, as the chief deliberative and policy-making organ of the United Nations, in its overall responsibilities in reviewing the outcome as well as the implementation of conferences.

1. General Assembly

10. Since the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the General Assembly, in addition to following up major United Nations conferences and summits, has been focusing notably on assessing progress towards implementing the Millennium Declaration (see sect. II.A. below).[6] The goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration are closely linked with the key objectives agreed upon at major United Nations conferences and summits. The follow-up process to the Millennium Summit thus creates new opportunities to reinforce the key objectives of other conferences and to accelerate momentum for their implementation.

2. The role of the Council in follow-up to United Nations conferences

11. The Council reviews progress in the implementation of issues common to all conferences during its annual coordination segment.[7] The Council's annual high-level segments, which result in ministerial declarations, also provide guidance to the international community, the functional commissions and the United Nations system on key issues relating to the follow-up to conferences.[8] The following theme has been selected for the 2002 high-level segment: "The contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development". The Council thus will be able to contribute to the discussion of the General Assembly on the treatment and prevention of communicable diseases, which will be one of the themes of the 2002 report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

12. The Council also focuses on cross-cutting issues of conferences when it reviews the work of its functional commissions on the basis of the consolidated report of the Secretary-General on the work of the functional commissions. This report is a means of facilitating the Council's role of providing overall policy guidance to the commissions on key goals common to all conferences. It can be used to ensure that all functional commissions provide a substantive and focused contribution to overarching goals, such as poverty eradication, sustainable development and gender equality.

13. Follow-up to and implementation of agreed conclusions 2000/2 require an ongoing commitment on the part of the Council, its functional commissions and the entities of the United Nations system to work in a coordinated fashion towards cross-cutting conference goals and to adhere to the guidance provided by the General Assembly and the Council (see E/2001/73, paras. 15-23). The Council will further enhance its role in promoting a coordinated follow-up to conferences along the lines identified in its recent agreed conclusions and resolutions on conference follow-up.[9]

3. The functional commissions

14. In resolution 2001/21, the Council underlined the specific responsibilities of the relevant functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, in reviewing and assessing progress achieved, lessons learned and problems encountered in the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits. The Council should keep under review any proposal made by the functional commissions to improve the review of conferences and summits.

15. The Commission on the Status of Women, for instance, has undertaken its responsibilities in follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing,

1995) through a multi-year programme of work which covers the period 2002-2006. This multi-year programme provides a framework to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action[10] and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000),[11] and aims at ensuring their effective implementation through more practical and action-oriented initiatives and outcomes. In 2005, the Commission will undertake a review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the special session of the Assembly, and deal with current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls.

16. The Commission on Sustainable Development is devoting its tenth session (2002) to the 10-year review of progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992). In resolution 55/199, the General Assembly decided that the Commission at its tenth session should meet as an open-ended preparatory committee for the 10-year review and mapped out the framework for the preparatory process of the 10-year review. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided to organize the 10-year review at the summit level to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development, and to call the Summit the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Summit will be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002. Responsibilities of the Commission acting as the preparatory committee for the Summit, include, inter alia: (a) to identify major accomplishments and lessons learned in the implementation of Agenda 21;[12] (b) to identify major constraints hindering the implementation of Agenda 21, propose specific time-bound measures to be undertaken, and institutional and financial requirements, and identify the sources of such support; (c) to address new challenges and opportunities that have emerged since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, within the framework of Agenda 21; and (d) to address ways of strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development and evaluate and define the role and programme of work of the Commission.

17. The Commission for Social Development has the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (2000). When deciding on its first multi-year programme of work for the years 1997-2000, the Commission recognized that the core issues of the Social Summit were interrelated and interdependent. In 2001, the Commission adopted a multi-year programme of work for the period 2002-2006, which was designed to give further in-depth consideration to several important core themes of the Social Summit and the special session. The exact modalities for the Commission's 10-year review in 2005 have yet to be determined. However, at its forty-third session in 2005, the Commission will consider the priority theme "Review of further implementation of the Social Summit and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly", in accordance with its multi-year programme of work. A decision by the Assembly or the Council on the coordinated implementation of and follow-up to all major United Nations conferences and summits could impact the Commission's 10-year review. The Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session specifically requested the Council to consider, through the Commission, ways of sharing experiences and practices in social development, so as to assist Member States in the development of policies to promote the goals of the Social Summit.[13]

18. The Commission on Population and Development monitors the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994).[14] The five-year review of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action during the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly (1999) showed that the implementation of the recommendations of the Programme of Action had yielded positive results but that for some countries and regions, progress had been limited and in some cases, setbacks had occurred. The special session adopted a set of key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.[15] The second quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action is scheduled for 2004. Preparations for a report is in progress, taking into account the views of Member States.

19. The Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-eighth session (2002) adopted, on 25 April 2002, with regard to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban, 2001), resolution 2002/68 entitled "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance", in which the Commission addressed the issue of the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (see A/CONF.189/12 (Part I), chap. I). The Commission decided, inter alia: (a) to establish an intergovernmental working group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and on the preparation of complementary international standards; (b) to establish a working group of five independent experts on people of African descent; (c) to establish a voluntary fund to provide additional resources for, inter alia, the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; and the participation of people of African descent, representatives of developing countries, non-governmental organizations and experts in the open-ended sessions of the Working Group on People of African Descent; and (d) to include in its agenda a separate item entitled "Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action".

20. As requested in the Political Declaration (para. 20),[16] adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session devoted to countering the world drug problem together (1998), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs receives biennial reports on efforts by countries to meet the goals and targets for 2003 and 2008 agreed to at the twentieth special session. The Commission provided further guidance on the preparation of subsequent reports in its resolution 44/2.[17] At its forty-fifth session in March 2002, the Commission decided[18] that the theme of the ministerial-level segment in 2003 should be the assessment of the progress achieved and the difficulties encountered in meeting the goals and targets set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its twentieth special session. The resolution also provides for the issuance of a joint ministerial statement as a conclusion of the ministerial-level segment which will be submitted to the Assembly, together with the report of the Commission in 2003 on the progress achieved in meeting the goals and targets set out in the Political Declaration.

C. Participation of relevant stakeholders

21. In agreed conclusions 2000/2 (para. 19), the Council stressed the importance of the involvement and participation of relevant actors of civil society in each conference review. Likewise, the General Assembly, in resolution 55/162 on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, called for enhanced partnership and cooperation with national parliaments as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to ensure their contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

22. Representatives of non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders participate in the work of the functional commissions, for example, in general debates, or interactive dialogues, or as members of panels. For instance, during its session in 2002, the Commission for Social Development included a non-governmental organizations dialogue segment under its priority theme. Since 1998, the Commission on Sustainable Development has held multi-stakeholder dialogues during its annual sessions. The two-day dialogue, as an integral part of the session, brings together representatives of the business community, trade unions, local authorities, the scientific community and non-governmental organizations for an exchange of views with Governments. Multi-stakeholder dialogues are also planned as part of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 26 August-4 September 2002) and have already been held during the sessions of the Commission acting as the preparatory committee for the Summit.[19] Various stakeholders have been highly active throughout the preparatory process for the World Summit.

23. The Council needs to ensure that actors of civil society, including women's groups and networks, the private sector and other stakeholders are systematically involved in its work on conference follow-up, including follow-up to the Millennium Summit. The Council's high-level and coordination segments can provide a possible forum for active participation of relevant stakeholders. The round tables held in preparation for the 2002 high-level segment on "The contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development" and the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the segment in recent

years have been significant developments in this regard. They should be maintained in future years.

D. Recommendations

24. **In discussing periodic conference review processes, the General Assembly may wish to take into consideration the guidance of the Council as contained in agreed conclusions and in Council resolution 2001/21 as well as the options proposed by the Secretary-General in 2000 and 2001 for effective conference review at intergovernmental level.**[20]

25. **The General Assembly may also wish to reaffirm the Council's role in promoting a coordinated follow-up to conference goals and in addressing cross-cutting conference themes as a key ingredient in conference reviews. It may wish to further stress the Council's role with respect to integrating the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the International Conference on Financing for Development and other conferences.**

26. **The Council should keep under review any proposal made by the functional commissions to improve the review of conferences and summits.**

27. **The Council needs to ensure that actors of civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders are systematically involved in its work on conference follow-up.**

II. Follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration

28. As outlined in the 2001 report of the Secretary-General on conference follow-up, a comprehensive assessment of progress made in achieving the socio-economic goals and targets set in the United Nations Millennium Declaration should include assessment of progress in implementation of the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s and their quinquennial reviews.[21] Consideration needs to be given on how to ensure full integration between the review and follow-up processes of the Millennium Summit and of other conferences.

A. General Assembly

29. In resolution 55/162, the General Assembly stressed the need for maintaining the political will and momentum of the Millennium Summit in order to translate commitments into concrete action and recognized the necessity for creating a framework for the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In the same resolution, the Assembly reiterated the call to assess, on a regular basis, progress towards implementing the Millennium Declaration and requested the Secretary-General to prepare a long-term "road map" towards the implementation of the Millennium Declaration within the United Nations system to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session (see A/56/326).

30. The General Assembly, in resolution 56/95, recommended that the road map be considered a useful guide in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration by the United Nations system and requested the Secretary-General to prepare an annual report and a comprehensive report every five years on progress achieved by the United Nations system and Member States towards implementing the Millennium Declaration, drawing upon the road map and in accordance with resolution 55/162. The Assembly also requested that the annual reports focus on cross-cutting and cross-sectoral issues, as well as on the major areas set forth in the road map, while the quinquennial comprehensive reports examine progress achieved towards implementing all the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration. As proposed in the road map, the Secretary-General will provide reports on conflict prevention and the treatment and prevention of communicable diseases (2002); financing for development and strategies for sustainable development (2003); and bridging the digital divide and curbing transnational crime (2004). These reports will review progress in fulfilling the Millennium Declaration commitments and highlight particular themes of special significance for a given year (see A/56/326, paras. 305-306).

31. The road map contains an integrated and comprehensive overview of the current situation and outlines potential strategies for action that are designed to meet the goals and commitments set out by the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It concludes by noting that the entire United Nations family of Member States, international organizations, funds,

agencies, programmes, the private sector and civil society must join together to meet the commitments embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

B. Possible contributions by the Council and its functional commissions

32. Within the United Nations system, the Council has an important role in contributing to the progress towards the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The detailed strategies, actions and goals defined at conferences provide key means for achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration. The Council's contribution to maintaining the focus on these goals, promoting their coordinated implementation and addressing common themes, both at intergovernmental level and in countries' development strategies, is key to achieving the millennium development goals. The Millennium Declaration has presented new challenges to the Council with respect to its role of coordinating the follow-up to major conferences and summits. At the same time, it brings together conference goals in a synthesized manner and thus provides an important tool for the Council to better organize its work in relation to conference follow-up.

33. As a main contribution to United Nations Millennium Declaration implementation, the Council would need to continue to focus on cross-cutting issues of conferences, inter alia, at the high-level, coordination and operational activities segments of its annual substantive session. It may wish to ensure that the themes it chooses for consideration at these segments have a clear link to the goals of the Millennium Declaration. The Council could ask the secretariats to highlight links to the goals of the Millennium Declaration in their reports for these segments and to identify recommendations that the Council can make to the General Assembly to assist in follow-up to the Millennium Declaration. At its 2002 high-level segment, entitled "The contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development", the Council will, for instance, examine issues that are key to progress in achieving some of the major goals of the Millennium Declaration.

34. Furthermore, the Council's ongoing work on basic indicators contributes to harmonizing the monitoring processes for major United Nations conferences and the Millennium Summit. As proposed by the Council,[22] the Statistical Commission is serving as the intergovernmental focal point for the review of the indicators used by the United Nations system for the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits at all levels.

35. The Statistical Commission at its thirty-third session thus considered the report of the Secretary-General on the harmonization of development indicators, which focuses on the statistical implications of the United Nations Millennium Declaration follow-up process (see E/CN.3/2002/25). The Commission expressed concern that, in order to reduce the reporting burden on countries, further harmonization and rationalization of indicators would be needed, in particular with respect to the recent emergence of the Millennium Declaration indicator set. It agreed to submit the report of the Friends of the Chair of the Commission on an assessment of the statistical indicators derived from United Nations summit meetings (see E/CN.3/2002/26) to the Council. The Council will also have before it a progress report of the Secretary-General on basic indicators for the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits at all levels (E/2002/53).

36. It should be noted that the report of the Friends of the Chair recommended, inter alia, that the Council should recognize the need to support and develop core statistical capacity within Member States, including statistical infrastructure (para. 39), as the ability to produce consistent, reliable statistical information on an ongoing basis requires a sustained statistical capacity. The importance of effective international support in that context for developing countries was also stressed.[23] The Commission emphasized that statistical capacity-building efforts and related technical cooperation activities need to be embedded within the national framework of development policies. The Council had reaffirmed, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 2000/27, the importance of national efforts to build statistical capacity in all countries, inter alia, through statistical training.

37. In addition to the Statistical Commission, a number of other functional commissions are seeking to integrate the review and follow-up processes of the Millennium Summit and other conferences in their work. The Commission on the Status for Women, for

instance, has undertaken particular efforts to strengthen linkages between follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In its key objectives, the Millennium Declaration identified several areas of particular significance to gender equality: poverty eradication, sustainable development, peace and security, human rights, education and health. The Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly identify strategic objectives and actions that directly support achievement of the specific goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration. Submitted to the forty-sixth session of the Commission in March 2002, the Secretary-General's report on the thematic issues before the Commission (E/CN.6/2002/9) emphasized the links between the Millennium Declaration's goals in poverty eradication and gender equality, highlighting that the Millennium Declaration considered gender equality and the empowerment of women effective ways to combat poverty. The Commission, in adopting agreed conclusions on the two thematic issues, entitled "Eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world" and "Environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters: a gender perspective", further underlined these linkages. Both sets of agreed conclusions recall the Millennium Declaration and its particular relevance to each theme. The work of the Commission in 2003 will provide further opportunities for linking the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session with the Millennium Declaration, notably in respect of spreading the benefits of information and communication technologies to all and combating violence and discrimination against women.[24]

38. In its agreed conclusions on the priority theme entitled "Integration of social and economic policy", the Commission for Social Development at its fortieth session (2002) specifically noted that the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration to a large extent are derived from the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (2000). Thus, while the Commission is not assigned any specific mandate in the implementation of the outcome of the Millennium Summit, its promotion of the outcomes of the Social Summit and the special session supports the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration. The goal of the Millennium Declaration (para. 12) to create an environment conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty carries forward the concept of an enabling environment for development established at the Social Summit. Both the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development[25] and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the Assembly[26] contain a comprehensive catalogue of recommendations that define and promote such an enabling environment. Several of the themes of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission for 2002-2006 are directly related to the promotion of an enabling environment for development, including in particular the priority theme in 2002 entitled "Integration of social and economic policy".

39. Achieving the goal of eradicating poverty is an integral part of the ongoing follow-up by the Commission for Social Development to the Social Summit and the twenty-fourth special session. The goal of halving the proportion of people living in absolute poverty by the year 2015 contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (para. 19), was first adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session.[27] The 2006 priority theme of the Commission, "Review of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)", will be a timely occasion for the Commission to take stock of progress towards achieving the Millennium Declaration poverty goal.

40. Since the Millennium Summit, the Commission on Sustainable Development, in implementing its programme of work, has consistently sought to align its activities with the goals and targets of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which has figured prominently in the preparatory processes for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Commission, taking into account section III of the Millennium Declaration, has continued to accord priority to the support for small island developing States in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[28] and in addressing the special vulnerabilities of small island developing States.

41. The objectives of the United Nations Forum on Forests are fully reflecting the goal of the United

Nations Millennium Declaration to intensify collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (para. 23). They specifically aim at promoting the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and strengthening long-term political commitment to this end. One of the principal functions of the Forum encompasses implementing the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, seeking political commitment and further mobilizing international resources to assist developing countries. The 2002 ministerial declaration and message from the United Nations Forum on Forests to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/PC/8, annex) reflect these strategic orientations of the Forum.

42. During the coordination segment of its substantive session of 2002, the Council will have the opportunity, under the umbrella of the overall theme on strengthening the Council, to further reflect on its role in support of the General Assembly in achieving the millennium development goals.[29]

43. A number of improvements could be made regarding documents presented to the General Assembly, the Council and their subsidiary bodies on the follow-up to conferences and summits. Currently, reports on the follow-up to conferences and summits include:

(a) Reports considered only by the General Assembly on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and on the follow-up to individual conferences;

(b) Reports considered only by the Council on (i) a cross-cutting theme of conferences (coordination segment), (ii) the coordinated follow-up to conferences (general segment), and (iii) individual conferences (for example, Fourth World Conference on Women, United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) or World Summit on the Information Society) (general segment). The reports of the functional commissions also address the follow-up to the conferences within their area of responsibility;

(c) Thematic or general reports presented to the functional commissions on the follow-up of the conference(s) within their area of responsibility.

A greater effort should be made to build a clearer architecture among these reports, and to ensure that they follow a similar format and approach.

C. United Nations system global campaign for the millennium development goals

44. The General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session invited the Council to consolidate the ongoing initiatives and actions established in the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) and the recommendations contained in the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session with a view to launching a global campaign to eradicate poverty to achieve this goal. The Council decided to keep the global campaign for poverty eradication under review in the context of its work on coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits.[30] The note by the Secretariat on a global campaign for poverty eradication (E/2001/84), submitted to the Council at its substantive session of 2001, had recognized the wide-ranging scope of the recommendation of the twenty-fourth special session of the Assembly to launch a global campaign to eradicate poverty and identified two broad components through which the Council could articulate its action (para. 3). Most recently, the International Conference on Financing for Development formally endorsed the Monterrey Consensus (A/CONF.198/11, chap. I, resolution 1, annex) which supports "the United Nations in the implementation of a global information campaign on the internationally agreed goals and objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration" (para. 71).

45. In view of the central place that poverty eradication occupies among the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the intention is to pursue the global campaign on poverty eradication as an integral part of a broader global campaign for the millennium development goals. This integration was strongly supported by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its first regular session of 2002. Preparatory work is well under way for the launching of the global campaign for the millennium development goals. The campaign is managed by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as Chair of the

United Nations Development Group (UNDG), whom the Secretary-General asked in December 2001 to act as "campaign manager" for the millennium development goals within the United Nations system.

46. The campaign will build on, inter alia, global and country reporting, supported by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and UNDP respectively, and leading to the submission by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly of annual reports on the implementation of the millennium development goals. In addition, there will be global and national information campaigns. Finally, at the request of developing countries, United Nations operational activities for development will support countries in reaching the millennium development goals. Agencies and other bodies within the United Nations system will be fully engaged in this work, as a crucial component of the ongoing effort to enhance coordination in the United Nations system through the commitment of all agencies to a common, coherent vision and agenda.

47. For its part, UNDG, as a first step, has established a working group that will be the hub for relevant work associated with the millennium development goals. The working group is linked to, and will be working closely with, as appropriate, other key groups and networks within the United Nations system such as the inter-agency Communications Group.

D. Recommendations

48. **The Council may wish to express its commitment to giving the highest priority to supporting the General Assembly and the system as a whole in achieving the millennium development goals, as an integral part of its work on the follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, inter alia, through its high-level, operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation, and general segments.**

49. **The Council may wish to reflect on the most effective ways of linking the review and follow-up processes of the Millennium Summit with those of other conferences and ensuring full integration among these processes. In this context, the Council may wish to pursue and elaborate proposals for ensuring greater overall coherence and consistency among the reports presented to the General Assembly, the Council and their subsidiary bodies on issues related to the conferences and summits.**

50. **The Council could encourage efforts conducted under the leadership of the Statistical Commission to harmonize indicators used by the United Nations for the integrated and coordinated implementation of conferences and summits. It could also encourage further efforts to harmonize the various development indicator sets, including the indicators for the millennium development goals.**

51. **The Council should reiterate the need to support and develop core statistical capacity within Member States, including statistical infrastructure, and urge the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the international community, to promote technical assistance for this purpose.**

52. **The Council may wish to encourage efforts undertaken by the organizations of the United Nations system in relation to the global campaign for the millennium development goals, focusing on the eradication of poverty, and provide further guidance to the system's contribution at the global, regional and country levels. The Council may wish to call on Member States to extend their support to this undertaking.**

53. **The Council may also wish to address its own role in the global campaign for the millennium development goals, inter alia, within the context of its role regarding the coordinated follow-up to conferences and its functions relating to policy review in operational activities. It may wish to invite the Secretary-General to report to the Council in 2003 on progress accomplished in supporting the global campaign for the millennium development goals.**

III. Other developments related to conference follow-up

54. The International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, both of which are being held in 2002, provide an opportunity for the Council to play a key

role as a central forum for the follow-up processes of these two conferences and to promote an integrated approach to their goals and those of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The special session of the General Assembly on children and the "World Food Summit: five years later" are also being held in 2002. In addition, the Council needs to tackle the challenges posed in the areas of gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/CONF.191/11).

A. New approach regarding follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development

55. The International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002) has established a mechanism for its follow-up that is different from the mechanism of earlier conferences. The Monterrey Consensus called for making fuller use of the Council for the purposes of follow-up to the conference (para. 69). This provides a unique opportunity for the Council to become a key global platform for engaging partners on issues of development, finance, policy coherence, and aid effectiveness as well as strengthening the links among relevant institutions at the intergovernmental level.

56. An important element in this process is the special high-level spring meeting between the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. Since 1998, the Council's special high-level meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions have involved finance ministers in a dialogue with ministers of foreign affairs and development cooperation on the longer-term developmental impact of economic and financial change. This year's spring meeting, held on 22 April 2002, served as a forum for an exchange of views on matters related to the follow-up of the Monterrey conference. Future meetings should provide an opportunity to further address issues of coherence, coordination and cooperation between the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, as outlined in the Monterrey Consensus. The Council should consider how best to adjust these joint meetings to carry forward such tasks in close consultation with the organizations concerned.

57. The follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002) will provide a further opportunity for the Council to advance policy coherence in the follow-up process to a major conference. A balanced approach should be taken within the United Nations system in improving the integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. To achieve this goal, greater emphasis should be placed on promoting coherence in the work of intergovernmental bodies, on fostering partnerships and on strengthening the involvement of multi-stakeholders. Also in this area, stronger links should be established between the United Nations and international finance and trade institutions. The above-mentioned spring meetings between the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization should be viewed as one of the key means of achieving more effective and efficient collaboration among these bodies, including the promotion of a coordination framework in the area of sustainable development.

58. The Council should thus consider ways of strengthening its coordination role in relation to the multisectoral dimensions of sustainable development, inter alia, through its high-level, coordination and operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segments and by enhancing coherence among its functional commissions which are dealing with the various aspects of sustainable development and, more generally, by contributing to and avoiding duplication in the work of the United Nations bodies.

59. The Council has the unique opportunity of establishing effective links between monitoring arrangements for the Monterrey Consensus and the outcome of the Johannesburg Summit as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration. During the coordination segment of its 2002 substantive session, the Council will also reflect on how to promote its role as the central forum for these follow-up processes.

B. Special challenges in conference follow-up

1. Gender mainstreaming

60. In its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all its activities in relation to

conference follow-up, the Council, in its resolution 2001/41, decided to establish, under the regular agenda item "Coordination, programme and other questions", the regular sub-item "Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system". In the same resolution, the Council also decided to devote the coordination segment of one of its substantive sessions, before 2005, to the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2[51] of the Council on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.

61. Since the adoption by the Council in 1997 of agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming, steady progress has been made at intergovernmental level and throughout the entities of the United Nations system in strengthening the integration of gender perspectives into all policies and programmes. Assessment of progress achieved at the intergovernmental level, especially by the Council's functional commissions, has been provided to the Council annually under the agenda item entitled "Social and human rights questions: advancement of women", in a report of the Secretary-General on "Follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly".[52] Assessment of progress achieved in mainstreaming a gender perspective in entities of the United Nations system has most recently been provided to the Commission on the Status of Women in a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2002/2). The newly created sub-item mentioned in paragraph 60 above will now give the Council the opportunity to systematically monitor progress made in gender mainstreaming not only by its subsidiary bodies, but also with regard to its own work, and to increase efforts to systematically reflect gender perspectives in the discussion and outcomes of all its segments. This should be facilitated by enhanced attention to gender perspectives in the reports of the Secretary-General prepared for these segments.

2. Least developed countries

62. In addition, the Council is addressing new developments regarding the follow-up to the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries[53] and, in decision 2001/320 of 24 October 2001, decided to establish, under the regular agenda item entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits", a regular sub-item entitled "Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010". In the same decision, the Council decided to consider, at a substantive session before 2005, devoting a high-level segment to the review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, and to consider later in the decade further options for such review and coordination. The Programme of Action had requested the Council to play an important role in its review and implementation.

63. The above-mentioned new sub-item on the review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 will be considered at the general segment of the Council's substantive session of 2002. The Council could decide to consider at its forthcoming substantive session, how to structure its review in relation to its work on the coordinated follow-up to conferences. Furthermore, in future years, the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/227 entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries", the first of which will be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, could be transmitted through the Council so as to enrich the Council's debate on this newly established sub-item. For subsequent years, the Council may consider advising the Secretariat and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on how to best prepare for the Council's annual review as requested by the Programme of Action (para. 111).

C. New developments at the special session of the General Assembly on children and the "World Food Summit: five years later"

64. The special session of the General Assembly on children (New York, 8-10 May 2002) will review progress achieved in improving the health, education and protection of the young people of the world, since the first World Summit for Children was held in 1990.

The Assembly at its special session is expected to discuss how investment in children contributes to global stability and peace and to commit to ways to improve child health and education as key strategies in reducing poverty. As an important follow-up to the 1990 World Summit, the review will chart the achievements and constraints of the last decade and renew the commitment and pledge for specific actions for the coming decade.

65. In its ongoing efforts to improve follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, the Council could take into account the outcome of the special session when reviewing the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and summits.

66. At the same time, the Council will consider the discussions and results of the "World Food Summit: five years later". This event will be held in Rome from 10 to 13 June 2002. It will consider the progress achieved since the 1996 World Food Summit and will concentrate on ways and means to accelerate the process. It will aim for reaffirmation of commitment to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security[34] and the World Food Summit Plan of Action,[34] the two documents adopted at the 1996 Summit. A main purpose of the 2002 Summit will be to secure commitment to the international community's fundamental development goals, including the target of halving the number of hungry people in the world by 2015.

D. Recommendations

67. **The Council may wish to consider ways and means for strengthening its capacity for developing, in consultations with the organizations of the United Nations system, effective system-wide responses to the challenges identified above.**

68. **The Council may wish to reflect on how to promote linkages between its discussions on gender mainstreaming and the review of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries within its overall role as the central coordinating forum for conference follow-up processes.**

Notes

[1] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth session, Supplement No. 3* (A/50/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 22.

[3] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth session, Supplement No. 3* (A/55/3/Rev.1), chap. V, para. 8.

[4] The options put forward by the Secretary-General are contained in his reports on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (see E/2000/57, in particular para. 33, and E/2001/73). The following options were outlined in para. 33 of E/2000/57:

(a) A single "10-year event" might be held to review the conferences in a sequential manner, be it an international conference or a special session of the General Assembly. Such a single event would be the culmination of a preparatory process encompassing the functional commissions and other relevant intergovernmental bodies, which would address core issues, as well as the Council, which would focus on cross-cutting issues;

(b) The review of the implementation of several programmes of action found to be closely related might be clustered at a special session of the General Assembly or other event. For example, the reviews of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States could be reviewed together. Similarly, the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women could be reviewed together in a separate cluster;

(c) The follow-up processes might be staggered so that there would be only one conference review in any given year. In this regard, the occurrence, for instance, in the same year of the 10-year reviews of the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women would be avoided;

(d) Five-year conference reviews and appraisals could in the future be carried out by the functional commissions themselves, the Council and the General Assembly, while special sessions of the Assembly or conferences would take place only for 10-year reviews. Indeed, it may be noted that the practice of holding special sessions of the Assembly to review the implementation of conferences after five years is fairly recent.

The following options were stressed in E/2001/73:

(a) The contribution of the Council in 10-year reviews in focusing on an integrated or multisectoral approach to assessing progress made (para. 62 (b));

(b) The unique position of the Council with respect to integrating follow-up to global conferences with the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the International Conference on Financing for Development (para. 62 (c));

(c) The possibility for the General Assembly to focus on overall policy issues and new and emerging trends (para. 62 (f)).

[5] See Council agreed conclusions 2000/2, para. 10.

[6] The agenda of the regular sessions of the General Assembly contains specific items on the follow-up to, for example, Agenda 21, the World Conference on Human Rights, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the World Summit for Social Development, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

[7] Themes discussed at the Council's coordination segments since 1996 have included poverty eradication, gender mainstreaming and development of Africa. The 2002 coordination segment will take up the following theme: "Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration".

[8] The high-level segment addressed, in 2000, information and communication technologies for development and in 2001, sustainable development of Africa.

[9] See agreed conclusions 1995/1, Council resolution 2001/21 and, in particular, agreed conclusions 2000/2, para. 10, which states:

> "The Council will pursue its role in addressing cross-cutting themes common to major United Nations conferences and summits. Furthermore, the Council will continue to promote an integrated and coordinated conference follow-up. In particular, it will follow up progress towards quantified goals and targets agreed at the conferences. The Council will draw the attention of the General Assembly to obstacles and constraints as well as to new challenges identified by the reviews that affect progress towards conference goals."

[10] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[11] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and Assembly resolution S-23/3, annex.

[12] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolution adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[13] See General Assembly resolution S-24/2, annex, sect. III, para. 10.

[14] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[15] General Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex.

[16] General Assembly resolution S/20/2, annex.

[17] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 8* (E/2001/28), chap. I, sect. C.

[18] See Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 45/7 entitled "Preparations for the ministerial-level segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, relating to the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly".

[19] See report of the Secretary-General on implementing Agenda 21 (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/7), paras. 165-172.

[20] See note 4 above.

[21] For details, including recommendations for the General Assembly, the Council and the functional commissions in relation to conference follow-up, see E/2001/73, in particular paras. 21-24.

[22] See Council resolution 2000/27 on basic indicators for the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits at all levels (para. 8).

[23] For detailed information on statistical capacity-building, see the report of the Secretary-General on statistical capacity-building (E/CN.3/2002/18) and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the annual report of the Steering Committee of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21) (E/CN.3/2002/19).

[24] The Commission's thematic issue entitled "Participation and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women" is tied directly to the United Nations Millennium Declaration's resolve to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, in conformity with recommendations contained in the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the Substantive Session of

2000 of the Council (see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/55/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 17), are available to all. Likewise, the second theme, entitled "Women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly", is tied directly to the Millennium Declaration's resolve to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Assembly resolution 34/180, annex).

[25] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[26] General Assembly resolution S/24/2, annex.

[27] Ibid., sect. III, para. 25.

[28] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[29] See the report of the Secretary-General (E/2002/62) for submission to the Council's coordination segment devoted to strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

[30] See Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/42, para. 1.

[31] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

[32] See, for example, E/2001/78.

[33] For detailed information on this issue, see the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up mechanism for coordinating, monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/56/645 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and 2).

[34] See *Report of the World Food Summit, 13-17 November 1996*, part one (Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1997), appendix.